CHEERY AND THE CHUM

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KATHERINE M. YATES

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CHEERY AND THE CHUM

By KATHERINE M. YATES

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CHEERY AND THE CHUM. Octavo, cloth colored illustrations, 60 cents.

K. M. YATES & COMPANY
5340 Cornell Avenue
CHICAGO

"It is hard to paint on a wiggly pig."

CHEERY AND THE CHUM

BY

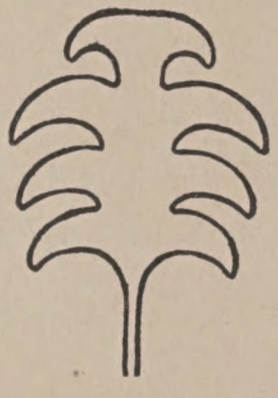
KATHERINE M. YATES

AUTHOR OF

"WHAT THE PINE TREE HEARD," "ON THE WAY THERE,"
"AT THE DOOR," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

CLARA POWERS WILSON



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CHAPTER I

Pink and White and Alive

CHEERY came out upon the veranda and stood looking about her. There are a great many things to see on a small girl's first day in the country; that is, the first day since last summer, which was a very long time ago.

There were two big locust-trees in full blossom, just across the gravel path, and stretched between them was a gay red-and-white-striped hammock. The hammock wasn't there last year, and Cheery wondered whether it had grown out of the trees during the winter, and also, whether it was that, or the white blossoms, or Mamma's handkerchief that smelled so sweet. She pulled the handkerchief out of her guimpe and sniffed at it very hard, but the odor

was not so sweet as what seemed to come from the direction of the locust-trees, so she walked to the head of the steps and looked down them. Somehow they did not look nearly so long, nor so steep, as they had last year, but last year she was only four years old, and this year she was five, and Uncle Rob had promised her that if she would not cry more than once a week, all summer, he would let her be six next year. And now she hadn't cried a single time for two whole weeks, and if she kept on that way, perhaps—only *perhaps*, for he hadn't said so, he would let her be seven next year instead of six—or, if she didn't cry any at all—Cheery's eyes grew big—perhaps next year she would be a beautiful young lady, with a long, fluffy, pink dress, and her hair done up high with a lovely comb. She gathered the curls into her hand, and just then a robin in one of the locust-trees called: "Cheery, Cheery, Cheery!" and she forgot all about the pink dress and the lovely comb, and started

down the steps. Half-way down she stopped suddenly.

"I 'most forgot!" she exclaimed, sitting down on the step and gazing longingly at the striped hammock that hung so temptingly low only across the gravel path. "I just know I could climb into it all by myself," she said, "and this step is so hard to sit on."

Aunt Beth peeped out of the front door. "Why don't you go and try the hammock, dearie?" she called.

"I can't," said Cheery.

"Why not?" asked Aunt Beth, coming out onto the veranda in her pretty blue kimono, with the big morning-glories straggling all over it. "I had it swung low on purpose so that you could reach it."

Cheery shook her head soberly. "No," she said, "I promised The Chum I would n't step off the veranda until he came."

"But he won't be here for two hours!" exclaimed Aunt Beth.

"I know it," said Cheery, bravely, "but

he was at my house last week, and when he found I'd get here first and see everything before he did, he felt so sorry, that I promised I wouldn't step one foot off the veranda until he came, so we could go with each other."

Aunt Beth came half-way down the steps and sat down beside the little girl. "Why did you promise him that?" she asked, taking Cheery's little pink fingers and pinching them gently, one at a time. "Didn't you know that it would be hard?"

Cheery nodded her head. "Yes," she said, "but it is just hard on the outside, you know."

"On the outside? What do you mean?" asked Aunt Beth.

"Why, you see—" Cheery couldn't find quite the right words, "—you see—when I look at the hammock over there, I want to go and climb right into it, but that's just on the outside—and then, when I think of The Chum, and of how glad he'll be that I waited, and what fun it will be to go with

each other, that's inside, and it's lots bigger, 'cause it's the thought love made — and so I'm going to wait."

Aunt Beth drew the little girl into her arms. "You believe the thoughts love makes are the best ones?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," said Cheery, earnestly, "Mamma always has me ask myself if love made me think things, and if love didn't, then she has me unthink them."

"Unthink them? How in the world do you do that?" asked Aunt Beth.

"Why," said Cheery, "when you think a thing, that's thinking it, isn't it?"

"Yes," admitted Aunt Beth, "I guess it is."

"Well, then, if you — if you — " Cheery stopped. It seemed very hard to make Aunt Beth understand; "why, if you turn it — back side forward that's unthinking it, isn't it?"

Aunt Beth laughed. "I suppose it is," she said.

"Of course it is," said Cheery, positively;

"so when I thought I wanted to do what I promised I wouldn't, that was thinking it; and then when I knew that love didn't make me think it, and knew that I'd really rather wait for The Chum, that was unthinking it, wasn't it?"

Aunt Beth hugged her. "It certainly was, dearie," she said, "and now I'll show you something, while we wait for The Chum. It's white and it's pink and it's alive, and it's for you two."

CHAPTER II

Mr. M—— and Brother

P jumped Cheery. She had been sitting still for a very long time for her. "What is it? Where is it?" she asked in a breath.

Aunt Beth's eyes laughed. "You must guess what it is," she said, holding fast to Cheery's hands.

"A ——a rabbit?" gasped Cheery.

"No." Aunt Beth shook her head.

"A ——a guinea pig?"

"No. One more guess."

"A ——a ——" Cheery was out of guesses, "—a baby alligator?"

Aunt Beth burst out laughing. "A pink and white baby alligator!" she cried. "No, no, honey—come and see," and she led Cheery through the long, wide, cool hall, by the broad stairway with its white balus-

ters, and out onto the vine-covered porch at the back of the house.

Cheery looked all about, but could see nothing but a queer-looking tin box on a wooden shelf. She went up to it, and looked closer, but it was only a tin box about a foot long and six inches high, and on one end, a sort of a wire shed, and, fastened to that, a tiny wire wheel, just like the wheel on a squirrel cage, only ever and ever so much smaller, not more than three inches high.

Cheery put out her finger and turned the wheel very gently, then she looked at Aunt Beth. "It isn't a wee, wee little bit of a pink and white squirrel, is it?" she asked, with big eyes.

Aunt Beth unfastened the lid of the box, which was on hinges, and turned it back, and Cheery peered in. At first she could see nothing but a little heap of white paper scraps, but presently she thought she saw something pink in the pile of paper, and she held her breath and looked closer.

Yes, it really was pink, and it shone like a tiny pink glass bead—it was an eye—it surely was an eye, and then she thought she saw a slight movement in the pile of paper. Oh, what could it be? Cheery lifted her hand, "May I—may I touch it, Aunt Beth?" she asked eagerly.

"Aren't you afraid?" asked Aunt Beth.

"Afraid!" exclaimed Cheery, "why no! If it's for me and The Chum, Love got it for us, and so there isn't anything to be afraid of." So she put out her finger very gently and touched the pile of paper just above the pink bead, and, suddenly, out jumped a tiny, tiny, wee little white mouse, with pink eyes and a pink nose, and a long, pink, waving tail.

"Oh—oh—oh!" exclaimed Cheery, clasping her hands together. "Oh, isn't he darling! Look at his teenty, weenty feet, and his pink ears and his long white whiskers! Oh, isn't he just a dear?" Whereupon Mr. Mouse sat up on his hind legs and squeezed his front paws together

and sniffed and wiggled his whiskers, as much as to say: —

"How do you do? Who are you? And where did you come from? And what made you drive me out of my cozy nest?"

"Oh, look at him! — look at him!" cried Cheery. "He's shaking hands with himself just the way Uncle Rob does when he sees me and can't reach me! Isn't he the dearest thing you ever saw?"

Mr. Mouse now walked to the side of the cage, and standing up tall and thin on his hind legs, with his forepaws as high on the side of the box as he could reach, sniffed and sniffed in a most inquiring manner.

Aunt Beth broke off a tiny bit of cheese and handed it to Cheery, but just as she reached it down toward the eager little mouse, there suddenly came a tremendous scrambling in the pile of paper, which flew in every direction, and out popped another mouse; not quite so large, but, as Cheery said, twice as lively, as the first; and before she could jerk her hand away, he had

jumped and seized the bit of cheese, and in a moment was over in one corner of the box, holding it up in his paws and nibbling it greedily, meanwhile keeping an eye on his brother.

Cheery burst out laughing. "Oh, you funny, funny fellow!" she cried. "Didn't he make me jump, though, when he popped out that way? And wasn't the other mousie surprised? He didn't know what became of it. Look! He's sitting up there and smelling of his paws now, as if he thought he'd let it get away from him somehow. Please give me another piece for him."

"Suppose we wait and see what he will do," said Aunt Beth.

Presently Mr. Mouse stopped smelling of his little pink fingers, and stretched himself up tall and thin again, reaching up the side of the box and sniffing eagerly; and then, as there was no more cheese in sight, he dropped upon all four feet once more; but just then he suddenly caught a whiff of the cheese over in the corner, and he

turned and sat up on his hind legs, and stared at his contented brother, as much as to say: "Now, where on earth did you get that, when I thought that *I* was the one that had it? and where have I been all this time, anyway?"

His brother didn't pay any attention, so Mr. Mouse dropped again to his four feet, and, with his eyes on the cheese, began to creep, slowly and softly, across the cage. The other made no movement beyond the rapid working of jaws and the turning of the cheese in his paws so that he could nibble it nice and even, but he kept his eye on Mr. Mouse all the time.

When the first mouse had nearly reached his brother, Cheery clasped her hands together tightly, for she was perfectly sure, that any second he would make a sudden pounce and seize the cheese; but no, he kept on gently, until he was right in front of the eater, and then he raised up on his hind legs and began to nibble on the other side of the luncheon, holding his paws

straight down in front of him like a kangaroo, and leaning forward so as to reach it without treading on his brother's toes; and the brother didn't make the least objection, but kept on nibbling and looking funny out of his round, pink eyes.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Cheery, "see how good they are to each other. His brother just did it for a joke, I know he did. He didn't want it all himself, any of the time, and he's just laughing out of the corner of his eye now, because he had so much fun. He wasn't really selfish or greedy after all, was he?"

CHAPTER III

The Chum

O you want to take one of them in your hand?" asked Aunt Beth, when the mice had finished the bit of cheese.

"Oh, may I?" cried Cheery; "I'd love to!"

So Aunt Beth reached into the box and softly put her hand over the first Mr. Mouse and lifted him out and put him into Cheery's eager palm.

Cheery laid her other hand over him so that just his little pink nose could poke out between her thumbs, and then she held her hands up to peep at him. "Oh, look!" she cried; "he's in church!"

"In church? What do you mean?" asked Aunt Beth.

"Why, don't you know—

'Here's the church,
And here's the steeple;
Open the doors,
And here's all the people' "—

and she held out her clasped hands, with her forefingers pointed together for the "steeple," and Mr. Mouse poking his nose out from between the front doors.

Aunt Beth touched the tiny pink steeple and the little gold ring on Cheery's finger. "It's a pretty pink and gold church, is n't it?" she said. "Not a bit gloomy and sombre. No wonder he's so contented there."

"Our church is white and gold inside," said Cheery, "and it's so bright and cheerful! — why, it just seems as if the sunshine stays in there all the time and makes everybody all warm and clean. I suppose it is love that makes it seem that way — but somehow love and sunshine always seem a good deal alike to me, don't they to you?"

In her earnestness Cheery opened her hands a little wider than she knew, and suddenly out popped Mr. Mouse, scratching

and scrambling along her wrist and up inside of her full white sleeve.

"Oh, oh!" cried Cheery. "Oh, mousie, mousie, your claws are sharp! Oh, Aunt Beth, how will we ever, ever get him out? He's gone clear up to my shoulder!"

"Never mind, dearie," said Aunt Beth; "don't be frightened, I'll attend to him."

"Oh, I'm not frightened," said Cheery. "He won't hurt me any worse there, than as if he were in my hand; but I don't see how we are going to get him out."

"I'll show you," said Aunt Beth, "if you will point to just exactly where he is, without touching him. He is so white that I can't see him through your white waist."

Cheery put her finger gently up to the back of her arm, and Aunt Beth softly laid her hand over the spot and held Mr. Mouse very tenderly, while she unfastened Cheery's waist and turned it back until she could reach the runaway and draw him from his hiding place.

Cheery laughed and shook her finger

at him as Aunt Beth placed him in his box. "Oh, Mr. Mouse, Mr. Mouse," she said, "you are bad—you ran away from church!"

"Perhaps the church wasn't big enough for him," said Aunt Beth.

"I guess it was a pretty tight fit," said Cheery.

"The train's whistled! The train's whistled!" called Uncle Rob from the front door, "and The Chum will be here in twenty minutes."

Cheery dropped the lid of the box and ran through the hall and Uncle Rob caught her and tossed her up onto the railing of the veranda, where she stood on tiptoe craning her neck and trying to see around the bend in the road below the hill. "Oh, dear! I can't see twenty minutes away," she cried, "and waiting takes so long!"

"It surely does," said Uncle Rob, and just then Mr. Cann came up the steps. Mr. Cann was the man who owned the farm and all the chickens and pigs and geese.

"Hello, Cheery-girl!" he exclaimed, catching both of her hands in one of his big ones, "where's The Chum?"

"He's coming, he's coming!" laughed Cheery, dancing so that Uncle Rob could scarcely hold her on the railing. "He's almost here. The carriage must be going by the wild-cherry tree right now, and it will be around the bend in just a minute. Oh, I'm so glad! I'm so glad!"

"Well, I can see why they call you 'Cheery,' all right," said the farmer, laughing; "but what started them to doing it?"

"Oh, my surely name is Charlotte," said Cheery, her eyes still upon the bend in the road; "but when I was little, I used to cry ever so much; I can't remember it, but Mamma says I did; and so, when I would be crying, Mamma would say, 'Come, come, be cheery, be cheery!' and then by and by I got so that when I wanted to cry I'd think about it and I'd say, 'Mamma, I'm cheery, truly I'm cheery,' even while I was

crying, and so, because I said, 'I'm cheery,' they got to calling me that, and——"

"And you grew to fit it," said Uncle Rob. "Well, I guess it would be pretty hard to be sour or cross, with every one saying and thinking such a happy word whenever they spoke to you or thought of you."

And just then the carriage did come around the bend, and Cheery almost screamed in her excitement when she saw the small figure standing up on the front seat and wildly waving a handkerchief. "It's The Chum! It's The Chum!" she cried over and over again. "Help me down, Uncle Rob, help me down, quick!"

The hill never did seem so long before, nor did the horses ever before climb so slowly, and Cheery stood on the lowest step and nearly tumbled off, in her eagerness.

"The Chum is my cousin," she explained to Mr. Cann, between the frantic wavings of her handkerchief. "He used to be only 'Cousin Robbie'; but just anybody can be cousins, so we decided for him to be my

chum instead, and now everybody calls him 'The Chum,' the same as I do. Oh, he's getting out of the carriage at the gate and I can't step off the step. Chum, oh, Chum, can you hear? It's pink and it's white and it's alive, and I didn't put one single foot off the veranda, and it's mice and it got up my sleeve, and Aunt Beth says there's some little turkeys and—oh, you pulled me off the step your own self; but I don't care, 'cause you're here now and it's all right, and let's go and see the pigs right off, quick! Come on, hurry!"

CHAPTER IV

Winkie Baby

THE sun had scarcely got his nightcap off, the next morning, before Cheery and The Chum popped out of the hall door and crowded their small heads together over the mouse-cage.

"We ought to name them," said Cheery.

"Why, I thought they were named," said The Chum. "Don't you like the names you called them yesterday?"

"What did I call them?" asked Cheery in surprise.

"You called them Mr. Mouse and Brother, when you told me about the cheese, did n't you?"

"Did I?" exclaimed Cheery. "I did n't notice,—I just had to call them something, so as to tell you about it; but those make

good names, don't they? Come, Brother, run into your wheel now and turn it for us as fast as ever you can," and with her finger she chased the little white fellow about the cage and at last through the opening and into the wire wheel; and in a moment the wheel was spinning around and around as fast as the little pink feet could make it fly.

Just then Mamma and Aunt Beth came out and sat down on the steps in the sunshine, to wait until breakfast was ready; and Cheery and The Chum sat on the step below them to listen to Aunt Beth telling about the ducks and the new duck-pond; when around the corner of the house came Mr. Cann, carrying, very carefully, something wrapped up in a red bandanna handkerchief. He came straight to Cheery, and stopping in front of her, held out the bundle. "I've got something for you," he said; and leaning over, he unrolled into her lap the littlest, tiniest white pig that anybody ever saw.

"We ought to name them," said Cheery.

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried Cheery. "Look at the darling little winkie baby! Isn't he the meentiest, weentiest little thing that ever was?"

Mamma and Aunt Beth bent over. "Goodness!" said Aunt Beth, "I didn't know a pig could be so little! Why he isn't bigger than a baby kitten,—look here —" and she took from the step beside her, a one-pound baking-powder can which The Chum had brought to go with his fishing outfit; and lifting the little pig gently in her hands, she let him down, bodily, into the can. In he went all over, tail, nose and all, and Cheery put her hand over the top of the can, to show that he was all in.

The Chum was standing anxiously on first one foot and then the other. "Are you—" he began, and then he stopped and rubbed his fore-finger hard on the railing of the porch.

"What is it, dear?" asked Aunt Beth, looking up from piggy.

"Are you—was you—was you going to

keep him in that? 'Cause — 'cause I've got a handkerchief box up stairs that he can have just as well as not."

"Would it fit him better than this?" asked Aunt Beth.

"Well, — I — I was going fishing this afternoon, an' —" Aunt Beth laughed and tipped the little pig gently into Cheery's lap. "No, honey," she said, "we don't want to keep him in that. I just put him in to show how tiny he really is. Here's your can."

"An' don't you want the handkerchief box?"

"No, dear."

"But I'd rather you'd have it. I'd rather you'd have it as — as not, 'cause — 'cause I — I —. Was I being selfish, Aunt Beth?" and The Chum's lip began to quiver.

"No, no, dearie!" said Aunt Beth. "Of course you weren't selfish. The can was yours, and you offered something else just as good; but the little pig is going back to the pen with the other pigs. Mr. Cann only brought it to show to us."

But Mr. Cann shook his head. "No," he said, "it's no use to put it back with the others,—it's too little. Why, it's nearly three weeks old now, and only that big! It hasn't any chance. It's too little to live."

Mamma reached over and took the little pig into her lap. "May we have it?" she asked.

"Of course you may," said Mr. Cann. "It's no good to me, and I thought it might amuse Cheery for a day or two."

"Thank you ever so much, Mr. Cann," said Cheery, gravely; and then, as he turned away, she crept close to Mamma and laid her hand on the tiny piggy. "Really wont it live, Mamma?" she asked.

Mamma smiled down into her eyes. "Can't you answer that question for yourself, dearie?" she asked.

Cheery's face brightened. "Of course it will," she said, the dimples coming at the corners of her mouth again, "and we know why, don't we? Shall I go and get a basket or something, for it to stay in?"

"Yes, please do," said Mamma. "Get your little Indian basket and put some cotton in it, and we'll have the winkie baby comfortable right away."

Cheery laughed. "That's what *I* called him, is'nt it!" she said. "I don't know why I did it, only he just looked that way."

When Cheery returned with the basket, Aunt Beth was coming out of the dining-room with a little butter-plate upon which was just one teaspoonful of oatmeal and cream. She held it in front of the winkie baby's nose, and suddenly he seemed to remember that he was a pig, and though he was so tiny that the meal was a very large one for him, yet no great big pig at a great big trough, ever got his fore-feet into his breakfast more eagerly, or grunted finer grunts—for his size. When he had finished, Mamma wrapped him in a bit of cloth and put him on the cotton-wool in the basket and set the basket in the sunshine, and she and Cheery each gave him a little loving pat and a little loving thought, as they turned to answer the breakfast bell.

CHAPTER V

What They Did

WISH that I could tell you all of the things that Cheery and The Chum did during those sunshiny summer days on the farm.

They went fishing in the little creek behind the barn; they fed the ducks, there were eight new ones since last year, all white with funny top-knots, and it was great fun to throw corn into the duck-pond and see them dive for the kernels, catching them before they reached the bottom of the pond. And by and by there were fourteen little yellow ducklings. Cheery and The Chum named them all, but they never could remember which was which. Then, too, they played with the calves, there were three of them, all black and white spotted, and the children

named the white faced one Daisy, and the one that was nearly all black, Topsey, and the one with one white ear and one black ear, was Goody Two Ears. "It's just as good a name as Goody Two Shoes," protested Cheery, stoutly, when they laughed at the name; "and she's got two ears, hasn't she?" which certainly settled the matter.

Mr. Cann put up a great big swing in the barn. It was fastened to a beam very high up, so that when the two wide doors at the back of the barn were thrown open, the children could swing away out through the doorway and far over the creek; and they could see the men at work in the hay, beyond the potato and corn fields.

The corn field was a delight; for, growing all among the corn, were corn-flowers such as grow in city people's gardens and are called bachelor's buttons; and they were blue—all shades of blue—and pink and purple and white, and they had splendidly long stems. Cheery always picked

"Where the squirrels were so tame—"

the blue ones only; but The Chum gathered every color that he could find. And sometimes they would get a needle and strong thread, and string the blossoms into long chains to wear around their necks.

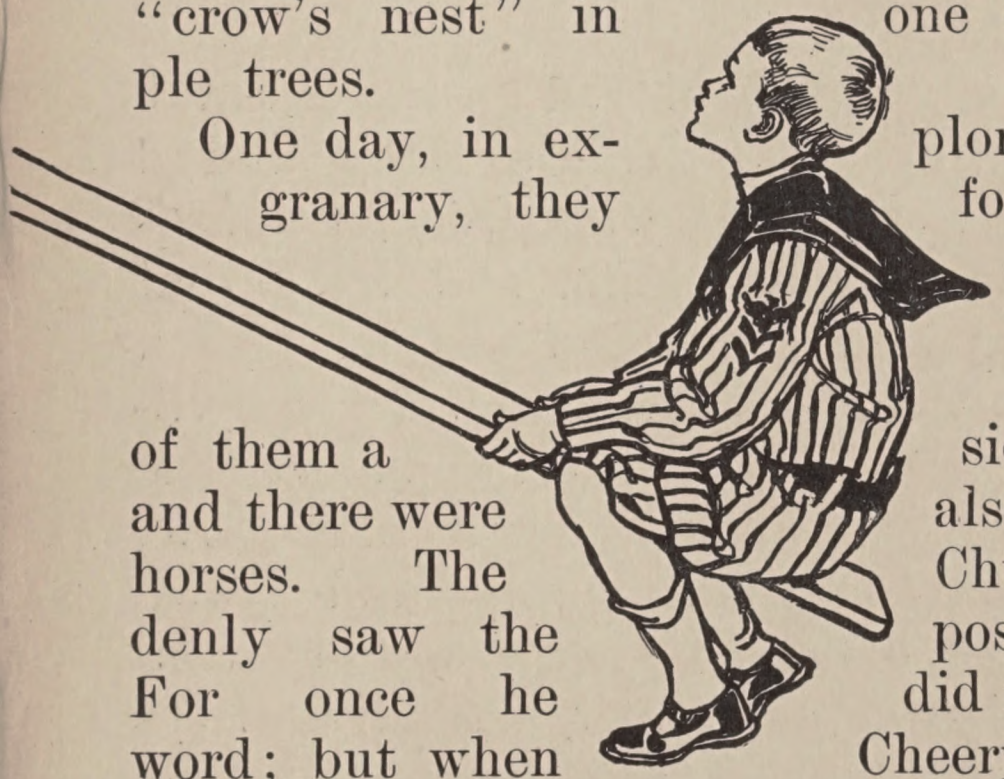
And in the corn field there were morning glories, too, pink and purple and white, like the corn-flowers, and the vines wound around and around, up the stalks, tossing out curly tendrils which caught Cheery's hair, and tapped their faces more gently than did the rustling corn blades. And in one end of the field there were pumpkin vines with great yellow blossoms, shaped like the morning glory blossoms, and there were always dusty bees buzzing in and out of them.

And then, over across the lane, was the maple grove; beautiful woods where they might play all they chose, and make believe that they were Indians or gypsies; and where the squirrels were so tame that they would come and take nuts from their fingers. And away beyond the mill was the

tamarack swamp. Cheery and The Chum might not go there alone; but often Mamma or Aunt Beth or Uncle Rob would take them for an afternoon, and then — wintergreens and partridge berries, and wonderful, tall ferns, as tall as the children, and great mossy logs to walk on, and Uncle Rob would bend down a sapling, so that they might swing; and once they found some curious plants that Aunt Beth said were Indian pipes, queer, pale flowers with leaves and stem and blossom all pure white. Cheery thought them lovely; but she loved her dear

corn-flowers the best of all; and, somehow, after a visit to the wonderful tamarack swamp, the corn field seemed delightfully warm and cozy, and the rustle of the long corn blades, seemed happier than the sighing of the evergreen branches.

There was a splendid pile of lumber over by the granary, and they had great times climbing over it and making houses of the boards; and Mr. Cann made them a perfectly fine see-saw; and, too, there was a "crow's nest" in one of the apple trees.



One day, in exploring the granary, they found there stored, two saddles, one of them a side-saddle, and there were also two saw-horses. The Chum suddenly saw the possibilities. For once he did n't say a word; but when Cheery went to

feed Winkie Baby, he coaxed Uncle Rob out to the granary; and when Cheery returned, there were the two saddles fastened upon the two saw-horses; and from that time on, the children went riding every day, and had the most glorious canters up hill and down dale, without once going outside of the granary door. Uncle Rob made them fine willow switches with whistles in the ends; but they never whipped their ponies hard enough to hurt—even the switches.

On wet days they played on the veranda with the mice and Winkie Baby and a wonderful toy village with wooden houses at least four inches high, and trees that were green and curly and shaped like a Christmas tree. Sometimes, when the village was all set up, with the mouse-cage out on the "common" for a menagerie, Winkie Baby, fat and happy and grown to the size of a pussy-cat, would stroll down the principal street, upsetting trees and houses in every direction; and then

they would chase him all about the veranda, laughing and scrambling, while he grunted and squealed and dodged between their feet until they were as much upset as the village.

CHAPTER VI

Winkie Baby in Disgrace

INKIE BABY had grown very fast after the first day or two of tender care, and he was soon running about under everybody's feet. He seemed to love Cheery best, and wherever she went, he trotted or galloped after her, giving little satisfied grunts and poking his nose against her heels. When she was out of sight, he wandered about forlornly; but as soon as her voice was heard, some one would call:—"Oh, Cheery, here comes the Baby!" and sure enough, Winkie Baby would come scampering toward her, emitting little grunts and squeals of delight. This was all very well while Winkie Baby was so tiny; but when he had grown to be about as big as a fox terrier, he began to be troublesome.

He was always under everybody's feet, or eating the meal from the chicken's pans, or the eggs from the lower nests in the chicken house;—and so, one day, he found himself shut outside of the garden gate.

At first he rather liked it, and ran down the lane, poking his nose into everything, and having a fine time; but by and by he grew lonesome and came back to the gate; and there he stood, patiently, until Uncle Rob came home, and then, as soon as the gate was opened, he dodged in. He didn't wait, politely, for Uncle Rob to go in first, he just went in under Uncle Rob's feet, and Uncle Rob sat down on the ground and watched him go! Then Uncle Rob and the children spent fifteen minutes in chasing him out again. Half an hour later, when Mr. Cann tried to come in, the same thing happened; and when Mamma and Aunt Beth came home, Cheery and The Chum had to climb over the fence into the lane and sit on him, so that they could get through the gate.

The next day Winkie Baby was nowhere in sight, nor the next, and Cheery and The Chum missed him so dreadfully, although they knew that he couldn't be lost, that Mrs. Cann at last said that she would help them to find him.

Now, Mrs. Cann had grown to be very fond indeed of Winkie Baby, in spite of his troublesome ways; for he was such a pretty, clean, white piggy; and she used to pet him almost as much as the children did. Perhaps Mr. Cann had told her where to look for him; for she led the children straight to the pig-pen, out back of the barn. Cheery and The Chum climbed up on the fence and Mrs. Cann peered over it; but look as they would, they could see never a sign of the pink and white Winkie Baby.

"Why, I was sure he was here!" said Mrs. Cann.

"But he isn't," said Cheery.

"No, he isn't," echoed The Chum.

And just then Mr. Cann came around

the corner of the barn. "I thought you said Winkie Baby was here," called Mrs. Cann.

"He is," said her husband, coming nearer.

"I can't see him," said Mrs. Cann, looking again.

"And I can't," said Cheery.

"An' I can't," echoed The Chum.

Mr. Cann laughed, and pointed to a dreadful, black mud-puddle, right in the middle of the pen.

Mrs. Cann shrank back. "That—that isn't Winkie Baby!" she cried, pointing to a small pig, wallowing and rooting in the very deepest of the mud.

"That's just who it is," said Mr. Cann, laughing again.

Mrs. Cann gasped. "That—that—my pretty, clean, pink and white Winkie Baby? Well you just please climb right in there and bring him out. I won't have him look like that!"

Mr. Cann protested, and the children

stared with open mouths at the disgracefully dirty, happy little pig; but Mrs. Cann was in earnest, and finally her husband climbed into the pen and fished the baby out of the puddle, in spite of his grunts and squeals, wiped him off with a wisp of hay and turned him loose to follow his rescuers back to the farm house. Once there, Winkie Baby was held under the pump, in spite of his struggles and wails, until he was himself again, and then — he made a wild rush for the nearest chicken pan.

CHAPTER VII

What Happened to Tiddledewinks

AUNT BETH had been out in the field gathering blue corn-flowers, and she came in through the shed-kitchen with a big bunch of them in her hands. As she opened the shed door, she thought that she heard a sound of skurrying, and stopped to peer about; but there was nothing in sight excepting a big tub of soap-suds and a big tub of bluing-water. Mrs. Cann was in the yard hanging out the clothes. "She splashes a good deal of water when she washes," thought Aunt Beth, as she paused at the kitchen table to arrange the flowers in a tall glass. Then she passed into the dining-room.

As she opened the door, she heard a sudden movement, and a faint meow from

Tiddledewinks. Tiddledewinks was the white, half-grown kitten which had strayed to the farm, and which Cheery and The Chum had pleaded to be allowed to keep. I said that she was white,—I meant that she ought to have been white; but she had not been trained to the art of cleanliness, and as a consequence, she was just about the dirtiest pussy that ever you saw.

Today, as Aunt Beth heard her faint meow, she turned quickly; for Tiddledewinks was not allowed in the dining-room.

But instead of Tidd, her glance fell upon Cheery standing almost behind the door, her eyes very big and her lips pressed tightly together and both hands behind her. If ever anybody looked guilty, Cheery did.

Seeing Cheery, Aunt Beth looked about for The Chum; for where Cheery was, there must always be The Chum, also. He stood on the other side of the table, only his head and shoulders showing above it. His eyes were big, too; but he wasn't looking at Aunt Beth,—only at Cheery.

"What is the matter?" said Aunt Beth, looking from one to the other.

There was no answer.

Again she asked, more soberly, "What is the matter?"

Cheery's lips remained tightly closed; but The Chum began to open and shut his mouth quite rapidly. "There — there —" he commenced, hurriedly, "— there isn't anything the matter wiv us; — but jus' you look at poor Tiddledewinks!"

Aunt Beth turned her eyes in the direction that his plump fore-finger pointed, and then her mouth opened and her chin dropped, and her eyes grew as big as the children's.

"Tiddledewinks!" she gasped. "Children, what —"

Cheery turned her eyes in the direction of the kitten, but her lips stayed pressed tightly together.

"Cheery," said Aunt Beth, "what have you been doing?"

No answer.

"Chum, tell me about it."

The Chum shook his head. "Cheery has to tell," he said. "I can't, 'cause it was Cheery—" he suddenly stopped and bit his lip.

"Cheery?"

No answer.

"Cheery, are you willing The Chum should tell?"

Still no answer.

"Cheery, one of you *must* tell, and it would be better for you to."

No answer.

Aunt Beth came closer. "Cheery, are you willing The Chum should tell me?"

Cheery pressed her lips a little tighter for a moment, then she nodded her head solemnly, blinking her eyes very fast.

"Now, Chum?" said Aunt Beth.

The Chum had come from behind the table, and his big eyes were turned awesomely toward the chair where lay Tiddledewinks. "Well," he said, swallowing hard, "you see,—she—she suds-ed her in

"—An' she blued her in the blue water—"

the suds-water, an' she blued her in the blue-water, an'—an' she wringed her an' she wringed her, an' she wanted to hang her up on the clothes-bars an'—an' the cothes-pins would n't stick!"

Aunt Beth looked at the cat and looked at the culprits, and pressed her lips more tightly together than even Cheery's.

"How did she wring her?" she asked, presently, her voice not very steady. Tiddle was always a remarkably thin cat, and she looked particularly thin just now.

"She—she wanted me to turn the wringer for her," said The Chum; "but I would n't, 'cause it looked so tight, an' she could n't get only the tip of Tiddle's tail in, her own self; an' so she had to jus'—jus' wring her."

"But how did she do it?"

"Why, jus' this way," said The Chum, going through the motions of wringing a wet towel; "but she would n't hold still, an'—"

But Aunt Beth gave one look at Tidd,

and then turned and went out of the room very suddenly.

The two culprits stood and stared at each other for a moment, and then Cheery threw herself on the floor and burst into tears. "Oh, dear!" she sobbed, "I don't care if it makes me only four again, my next birthday, I've got to cry,—I've just got to! I've gone and spoiled poor Tidd, and Aunt Beth is angry, and—and you think I'm dreadful—"

But The Chum was down on his knees beside her in a moment. "I don't,—I don't, any such thing!" he cried. "You didn't know it was going to spoil her! You jus' wanted to make her clean, 'cause she got the things in the bureau-drawer dirty yesterday, when you put her in there, an'—"

But just then Mamma came into the dining-room. She looked very sober, and her eyes seemed a little red, almost as if she, herself, had been crying. She only glanced at Tidd, and then turned her eyes

quickly away, and came and sat down beside Cheery and drew her into her arms, where the little girl lay sobbing for several minutes. By and by Mamma brushed the hair back from the damp little face, and looked lovingly into the wet eyes. "Come, come, be Cheery," she said.

Cheery smiled a very moist smile, and Mamma patted her shoulder, softly. "Do you want to tell Mamma about it?" she asked.

"Ye—yes," said Cheery, chokily; and then she told the whole story, while The Chum stood by, a sympathetic listener.

When she had finished, Mamma said, gently; "You meant all right, dearie; but don't you see, now, that there must have been something wrong about it, somewhere?"

"Yes, Mamma."

"Do you know where?"

"No, Mamma."

"Didn't you feel the least bit guilty any time while you were doing it?"

"Yes, when I saw how dreadful Tidd looked."

"But before that, didn't you feel a little afraid that you might not be doing quite right?"

Cheery thought for a moment. "Yes, Mamma," she said, at last; "I was afraid Mrs. Cann would come in before I got through, and make me stop; so I guess I knew it was wrong to use her tubs and her wringer and things, without asking.

"That was it, dearie," said Mamma. "It wasn't a love-thought that made you keep on, after you thought of that, was it?"

"No, Mamma."

"Well, now what do you think we would better do about it?"

'Why, I must be sure that I won't forget the love-thought again."

"And then?"

"I—I must tell Mrs. Cann I'm sorry, and—"

But just then Mrs. Cann and Aunt Beth

came into the room, and Cheery sat up and brushed away her tears.

"Mrs. Cann," she said, in a very shaky voice; "I'm sorry that I—that I la—laundered Tidd in your tubs and—and—"

But here The Chum broke in, eagerly, noticing that the usual smile was absent from Mrs. Cann's good natured face, and fearing that she was going to be cross to Cheery. "We—we're awful sorry, Mrs. Cann, if we mussed your tubs, honest, we are; but—but—" pointing at the little cat; "—but Tidd didn't like it a lot worse than you didn't—an—' she isn't saying a word!"

CHAPTER VIII

The Last Day

RS. CANN was dyeing carpet-rags, out in the shed-kitchen; and Cheery and The Chum were looking on, fascinated by the beautiful shades of red, blue and yellow which came out of those wonderful dye-pots. At last she had finished, and all of the rags were hung in brilliant festoons along the clothes line. Then she began to clear up. "I mixed too much of the color this time," she said, as she lifted a pail of red liquid, and bent to pour it into a pail of blue, so as to carry the whole to the drain at once.

"Oh, wait a minute!" cried Cheery, eagerly. "Please, may n't we have what is left? Aunt Beth gave me some silk pieces this morning, and I'd just love to dye them."

Mrs. Cann looked doubtfully at the children. "You'd get it all on your clothes," she said.

"Oh, that's all right," said Cheery. "We're going away tomorrow, you know, and Mamma has packed everything but our traveling clothes and these faded things that she isn't going to take along at all. She said we looked like two little ragged-robins this morning, when she dressed us;—so it won't do any harm at all if we get these spotted."

"Well," said Mrs. Cann, setting down the pail, "you may have it if you choose; but you must take it out to the barn to do your dyeing, so as not to muss things around here. I'll put it into some little pails that you can carry."

And so, in a few minutes, Cheery and The Chum were seated just inside of the wide back door of the barn, while the silk pieces and their fingers were turning red and blue and yellow, and Winkie Baby stood by and watched, and tried to poke his funny nose into the dye-pails.

By and by, when all of the pieces were dipped and hung up to dry, there still remained quite a good deal of the dye-stuff in the bottoms of the pails. The children looked at it thoughtfully; for it was entirely too interesting to throw away. "I'll tell you!" exclaimed Cheery, suddenly; "Let's paint pictures, great big pictures, instead of just little ones in books! Wouldn't it be fun?"

"Goody, goody!" cried the Chum. "Where's the brushes?"

"You go and ask Uncle Rob to lend us some," said Cheery, "and I'll get some big sheets of paper to paint on. Come on, hurry!" and away they ran with Winkie Baby at their heels.

Cheery got back first, with the paper, and had spread two big sheets on the floor and set the paint pails between them; when The Chum returned, trying the strong bristle brushes against the palm of his hand. "Uncle Rob gave me the biggest ones he had," he said; "'cause I told him

they were for big pictures; an' my, but they 're hard and scratchy!"

Cheery started her picture first by painting a very large blue tree, and The Chum watched her, eagerly. "Why don't you have a bird in your tree?" he asked, as she began to paint a big yellow sun beside it.

"You can paint a bird in yours," said Cheery, making the sun bigger and bigger, in an effort to make it round and smooth, instead of scallopy.

So The Chum began, and painted first a fine large blue bird with a yellow top-knot, and then a red tree below him;—at least, he said it was a bird and a tree;—and just then along came Winkie Baby and walked right across the red tree and stuck his nose into the yellow dye-pot.

"Oh, oh!" cried The Chum, waving his paint-brush wildly; "Get off of my picture, you bad Baby,—an' take your nose out—" and at that, Winkie Baby turned around and rubbed his nose right across the red paint-brush,—and then Cheery and The

Chum burst out laughing; for his chin was all covered with yellow dye-stuff, and there was a big red spot right on the end of his nose, and he certainly was a very funny looking pig.

Then Cheery had an idea. "Oh, I know!" she cried. "Let's dress him up in paint! You hold him."

And so The Chum put his arms about Winkie Baby and held him fast, and Cheery proceeded to clothe him in a fine coat of paint. First she put a yellow jacket on him, with red buttons down the front; and then a blue neck-tie. She scrubbed the dye-stuff in well, with the stiff brushes, so that not only was his thin white hair colored, but so was his pretty pink skin, as well. Then she painted big yellow rings around his eyes, for gold spectacles,— and then a blue moustache. And then she painted one ear red and one ear blue, and put a big blue paint bow on the top of his head;— and then The Chum said that it was his turn.

So then Cheery held the Baby, and The Chum went to work. First he painted the curly tail in rings, blue on the end, and then red, and then yellow; and then he painted a beautiful big red rose on one side of him, and a lovely blue violet on the other side. One could tell that it was a rose and a violet, because one was red and the other was blue;—but of course you know that it would be very hard to paint on a wiggly pig, and make things look exactly as you wish them to. And then The Chum painted on some red and yellow striped stockings, and some blue shoes; and then—they let Winkie Baby go, and stood back to look at him, shouting with laughter.

Winkie Baby didn't seem to mind it in the least; but stood and blinked at them through his yellow spectacles, as much as to say: "Well, I'm glad if you're having a good time; but I don't know what it's all about. Keep on laughing if you want to. It doesn't bother me."

"Come on, let's go and show him to Mrs. Cann!" cried The Chum, as soon as he could get his breath from laughing.

"All right," said Cheery, "only we must clear up here first," and she was just beginning to gather up the papers and brushes, when they heard Mr. Cann's voice, coming from near the pig-pen, just outside of the open door.

"I have only three pigs of the size you want," he was saying. "That is the best I can do."

"I wanted four," said a strange voice. "What about the white one that I saw in the yard as I came through?"

"No," said Mr. Cann. "The Children have raised that one by hand. I wouldn't like to sell that."

"It's just what I want," said the other voice.

"Still," said Mr. Cann, thoughtfully; "the children are going away tomorrow,—and it has come to be rather troublesome about the place."

"Better let me have it," said the other.

"Well," said Mr. Cann, slowly, "perhaps they wouldn't miss it this afternoon and —" and the two walked away, out of hearing.

Cheery and The Chum stood looking at each other with big eyes. Could it be that Winkie Baby was to be taken away somewhere, where no one would pet him or love him? The tears were very near,—and then, suddenly, Cheery's face brightened. "Don't you worry, Chum!" she exclaimed. "Winkie Baby will be taken care of,—come on,—we'll forget we heard it. I can beat you to the horse-trough!" and away they romped, Winkie Baby galloping after them.

Just outside of the barn door they almost ran into Mr. Cann and a strange man. The two smiled as the children ran past them;—but when their eyes fell upon Winkie Baby dashing after them, in all the glory of striped tail, mismated ears and yellow jacket, they burst into a roar of laughter.

"There's your white pig?" said Mr. Cann, as soon as he could speak, pointing his finger after the flying Baby. "Is that the sort of pork you're looking for?"

The man shook his head, ruefully. "Won't it wash off?" he asked.

"Indeed it won't," said Mr. Cann. "That's dye-stuff. The genuine article, warranted not to fade. It's what was left from my wife's carpet-rags this morning;—and it's scrubbed into his very skin,—I could see that as he passed. Think you want him?"

The man shook his head. "Nope!" he said. "If I hung that in front of my store, folks would think I kept a barber shop. I guess three pigs will have to be enough this time," and the two men turned away.

Half an hour afterward, Mrs. Cann came and kissed Cheery. "We came very near to losing Winkie Baby," she said; "but his new clothes saved him."

And Cherry heaved a big, happy sigh, and ran to tell The Chum.

* * * * *

And next morning, when they climbed into the carriage which was to take them to the station, Winkie Baby—yellow jacket, blue shoes, roses, violets and all—stood on the steps beside Mrs. Cann and grunted a cheerful farewell.

"We've had such a good, good time!" said Cheery, leaning out of the carriage for a last look around.

"Yes," said Uncle Rob, from the horses' heads; "Some one has said 'If you want to have a good time,—bring a good time with you;' and you two certainly brought yours along this trip, and some to spare for the rest of us."

"We surely did," said Cheery, happily; "and we're going to bring it with us again next year, aren't we, Chum?"

And The Chum, holding the mouse-cage tightly in his arms, nodded his head approvingly and echoed: "Surely, surely!" and away rattled the carriage down the hill.

CLARA POWERS WILSON

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